growers that the Government would take up with the Russian Federation the question of continuing the import of tobacco from India. Necessary protocol has been signed in this regard.

Observation of the Auction Platforms by Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce

1851. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Minister of State of his Ministry during his visit to Guntur and other tobacco growing areas on 26th December, 1991 agreed to inspect the auction platforms;

(b) if so, whether he has not inspected the auction platforms so far;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when he propose to undertake the visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) During his visit to Guntur in December, 1991, Commerce Minister had discussions with tobacco growers, traders, exporters and officials of Tobacco Board on all aspects of the tobacco industry including tobacco auctions. Since the auctions were scheduled to commence in February, 1992, there was no occassion for the Minister to inspect the auction platforms in December, 1991.

Working Barns in Tobacco Growing Areas of Andhra Pradesh

1852. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of barns that are engaged in the tobacco growing areas of Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) what steps have been taken to regularise the unauthorised tobacco barns?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Total number of barns licensed for operation during 1991-92 season in Andhra Pradesh is 38526.

(b) No steps have been taken to regularise the unauthorised tobacco barns.

Pressure of I.M.F. and Word Bank for the Withdrawal of Exim Scrips

1853. SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to scrap the Exim Scrips Scheme;

(b) if so, what are the reasons thereof;

(c) whether any evaluation study has been undertaken before scraping this scheme;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(e) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The newly introduced system of partial convertibility is an enlargement of the Exim Scrip system so far as exporters are concerned. Hence, Exim Scrips are not considered necessary except in the special case of Gem and Jewellery products.

India's Import Quota Regime

1854. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has studies the World Bank's publication titled "The open economy-Tools for policy makers in developing countries" which emphasises that India's import policy has been harmful to the country and increasing restrictiveness of quota protection may in fact lead to a determination of the trade balance accompanied by accelerated inflation and slower growth; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.